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Banned Clandestine Journal of Soviet Dissidents Reappears

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MOSCOW, May 12—The Chronicle of Human Events, the unofficial journal prepared by Soviet dissidents and suppressed in 1972 by the KGB, has reappeared after a hiatus of 18 months.

Three new issues of the Chronicle—which contains news of dissident activities, official repressions and report from prison camps and psychiatric hospitals—have reached Western newsmen here. Their appearance is a direct challenge to the political police, who have spent two years or more trying to eradicate the Chronicle and imprison those responsible for it.

With few exceptions, the news in these three new editions had already reached Western reporters in Moscow.

So, the mere fact of the Chronicle's reappearance is more noteworthy than the information it contains.

Dissidents suggested that these new issues were brought out primarily as a symbolic gesture of defiance to the KGB, which probably believed it had long ago succeeded in snuffing out the Chronicle. Several dissident sources acknowledge that the reappearance of the Chronicle now is misleading, since the KGB has succeeded in decimating the group that helped assemble and distribute it in its earlier life, which lasted from April 1968, to October 1972.

Some members of the tiny band of active dissidents believe it was a mistake to bring out new numbers of the Chronicle now, since this is likely to infuriate the KGB and prompt a new round of searches, arrests and trials. The appearance of these new issues, these dissidents say, will not alter the fact that their "movement" is weaker than it has been at any time since the mid-1960s.

Issue 28 of the Chronicle, the first of the three new numbers to reach Western journalists here, carries an implicit reply to these criticisms. It said:

"The reason for stopping publication of the Chronicle was the repeated threats of the KGB to answer each new issue with arrests of those the KGB suspected of participat-

ing in the editing and distribution of the Chronicle. . . If we should continue to keep silent, this would be equivalent to support by us—even if it is passive and involuntary support—for a tactic of holding hostages, which is contrary to moral law and human dignity. Thus the Chronicle resumes publication . . ."

The anonymous editors who wrote this note said they recognized "the grave responsibility" they had taken "for ourselves and also for others."

[According to Agence France Presse, persons who visited Pyotr Yakir, a historian who was arrested in connection with the Chronicle in 1972, said he told them the KGB has a list of 60 persons who would be arrested should a new issue of the journal appear.]

These new copies of the Chronicle—typed on onion-skin paper—were also accompanied by a statement signed by three dissidents who accepted the responsibility for giving them to Western newsmen. The three are Sergei Korvalov, a physicist and colleague of dissident leader Andrei D. Sakharov, the nuclear physicist; Tatyana Velikanova, described as a mathematics programmer, and Tatyana Khodorovich, a linguist. Their statement said:

"We consider it our duty to facilitate the wide distribution [of the Chronicle] to the maximum possible extent. We are convinced of the necessity of making available this very truthful information about infringements of the basic rights of man in the Soviet Union to everyone who is interested."

The three said they did not consider the Chronicle to be "illegal, slanderous or defamatory," despite contrary assertions by the KGB.

Dissident sources claimed the new issues were being distributed from hand to hand in Moscow and other cities, but this could not be confirmed. Dissidents consider it most important to get their documents to Western journalists here, so the news can be publicized in the West. That will result in it being broadcast back to the Soviet Union by Western radio stations.

The new issues of the

Chronicle are similar to earlier ones. They contain factual reports, all written in a dry, economical style.

For example, issue No. 30 contained this account of a previously unreported event in Kaunas, the capital of Soviet-Lithuania:

"On May 14th, the anniversary of Kalanta's self-immolation [Roman Kalanta, a student of 20, burned himself to death in 1972 as a protest on behalf of Lithuanian demands for freedom, setting off riots in Kaunas] special patrols of the militia armed with rubber clubs and equipped with walkie-talkies were all over Kaunas. There were also patrols of office workers and students who had been detailed to keep order. 'Freedom Alley,' where Kalanta burned himself, was very crowded; the militia did not allow people to stop there. Under various pretexts schoolchildren were taken out of the city. In some schools, classes continued from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Some people tried to put flowers on Kalanta's grave and on the spot where he burned himself, but they were arrested. The number arrested is not known."

The same issue reported on medical care in labor camps at Perm, in Siberia. It said that a Lt. Col. Kuznetsov, the head of the camp medical panel that decided which prisoners should be excused from work because of poor health, forced sick people to do hard labor.

"The medical panel declared healthy a Lithuanian named Kurkis who was nearing the end of his 25-year term," the Chronicle reported. "Kurkis suffered from an ulcer, and hadn't worked for many years. But after the panel's new decision he was put to heavy work, plowing the no-marrow zone. On the first day his ulcer burst. The head . . . of the camp called Lt. Col. Kuznetsov, who is also the camp surgeon, but Kuznetsov refused to attend to the patient, referring to the weather. Kurkis died."

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